

November 2004

Feature: Maori Television Service: A greenfields project

Our recent visit to Auckland for the SPADA Small Country, Big Picture conference, Screenrights representative Maha Ismail visited Maori Television Service (MTS) at their state-of-the-art facilities in Newmarket.

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International Standard Audio-visual Number

Screenrights and the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) have lodged an expression of interest for the administration of a new standard for identifying audio-visual works.

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Code of Conduct: Call for Submissions

The Code of Conduct for Collecting Societies is due for review with submissions invited on the operation of the Code and any amendments necessary to improve its operation.

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The newest player in New Zealand broadcasting and a recently signed up Member of Screenrights, MTS aims to build a loyal and sustainable audience and to promote the "revitalisation and normalisation" of te reo Maori and tikanga Maori. For those of us on the western side of the Tasman, this is Maori language and Maori culture, respectively.



Maori TV, Night photo of the front of the building. Courtesy of Maori Television.

The Maori Television Service (Te Aratuku Whakaata Irirangi Maori) Act was passed in May 2003. Maori Television launched less than 10 months later on 28 March 2004. But, according to Haggie, the battle for a Maori television channel began more than 30 years earlier when research showed that the Maori language was "in real danger of becoming extinct." Maori working for the survival of the language and those working in the television industry continued the battle through to the Privy Council, which determined that the New Zealand government had an obligation to ensure the survival of te reo Maori (the Maori language).

Haggie told OTA that Maori Television has a statutory responsibility to promote te reo and tikanga Maori (Maori culture) by delivering programmes that inform, educate and entertain New Zealanders and that enrich New Zealand's society, culture and heritage.

"Maori Television provides a window into the Maori world to promote cultural tolerance and understanding. For the first time the native language of New Zealand – an official language of this country – is being beamed into the homes of all New Zealanders," she said.

Setting up the service was, as Haggie said, "a greenfields project".

"A national Maori television channel has never been attempted before in New Zealand. Our programming and schedule are unique.

However, in designing the studios, MTS drew on the design of City TV in Canada, placing the main studio on the street front.

"This idea appealed to Maori Television because it was important for us to be able to interact and be part of the community," Haggie said. "This design allows the public to view television being made, any time of the day or night, and to be part of the Maori Television experience."



Maori artwork in the Maori Television building. Courtesy of Maori Television.



*Still from AROHA (which means love in Maori).
Courtesy of Maori Television.*

Maori Television has continued to clock up achievements, including the first broadcast of a nightly news programme, Te Kaea, on 28 March 2004; the first broadcast of its current affairs programme Te Heteri, and the release of the first cumulative ratings showing more than 350,000 New Zealanders were watching, with 65% of those viewers non-Maori.

"We have been inundated with messages of support and goodwill from both Maori and non-Maori," Haggie said. "Media reviews of the channel's style and programming continue to be positive. New Zealanders appreciate the opportunity Maori Television gives them to see the 'real' New Zealand on television."

Maori Television now broadcasts seven days per week from 4pm to 11.30pm, with a children's language learning programme broadcast each weekday between 10-11am.

The service plans to channel Screenrights royalties and other funding "into making more unique, fresh, vibrant Maori programming for all New Zealanders to enjoy."

"There are many challenges to setting up an indigenous television channel," Haggie said, "however the sense of pride and empowerment that an initiative such as this has given to many Maori and New Zealanders is extremely satisfying."

For more information, visit: www.maoritelevision.com

In terms of obstacles to establishing the service, Haggie names both funding and capacity as the two biggest challenges.

"Maori Television is a government funded organisation," she said. "This funding is limited and does restrict our ability to extend broadcast hours and UHF transmission coverage. It also impinges on our ability to produce high-end programming such as documentaries, drama series, etcetera."

In terms of capacity, Haggie said that the number of Maori with television industry and production experience is minimal.

"From production houses with Maori language and television production skills who can make our programmes, to Maori with the skills required to operate a television channel. Maori Television is taking a lead role in developing industry capacity."

From its first live to air broadcast of the opening ceremony (a five-hour production),



*Current affairs programme Te Heteri (The Sentry).
Courtesy of Maori Television*

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International Standard Audio-visual Number

Screenrights and the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) have lodged an expression of interest for the administration of a new standard for identifying audio-visual works.

ISAN (the International Standard Audio-visual Number) is a unique numbering system for film and television that will have applications in digital rights management systems, anti-piracy measures and collective rights management.

The expression of interest has been lodged with ISANIA, the international organisation administering the implementation of the standard.

Screenrights and APRA will next lodge a business plan for the administration of the standard with ISANIA.

If you would like further information, email Cate Hemmings, International Relations Executive: cate@screen.org

November 2004

Code of Conduct: Call for Submissions

The Code of Conduct for Collecting Societies is due for review with submissions invited on the operation of the Code and any amendments necessary to improve its operation.

The Review is being conducted by the Code Reviewer, the Hon J C S Burchett, QC.

Written submissions should be sent on or before 8 February 2005 to:

The Code Reviewer
Suite 704
4 Young Street
Neutral Bay NSW 2089

In addition to this, a meeting open to the general public will be held by the Code Reviewer at APRA, 6-12 Atchison Street, St Leonards, NSW on Monday 7 February 2005, continuing through to Tuesday 8 February if necessary.

The meeting will be held between 9.30am and 4pm and oral submissions may be made.

If you would like to make a submission at the meeting, you need to notify the Code Reviewer at the above address and provide an outline of the submission on or before 31 January 2005.

A copy of the Code can be obtained at www.screen.org

Second Review of Code Completed

The second review of Screenrights' and other collecting societies' compliance with the Code of Conduct has been completed and is available for viewing on Screenrights' website: www.screen.org

The Review was conducted by the Code Reviewer, the Hon J C S Burchett, QC. The report concludes that there has generally been a high level of compliance by collecting societies with the Code.

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Next deadline for international registrations

The next deadline for international registrations is approaching and Screenrights International is urging copyright owners who have not yet registered titles with them to do so, particularly if their programs were broadcast in Europe during the last three years.

Screenrights International regularly registers titles with overseas collecting societies. The next deadline is for registration with AGICOA, the umbrella organisation representing cable retransmission collecting societies in Europe. Registration is necessary in order to collect retransmission royalties being held by AGICOA on behalf of our members

To meet AGICOA's next deadline, we need to receive all title information from members by the end of January 2005, International Relations Executive Cate Hemmings said.

The details required by AGICOA are contained in our title registration forms. These are available on our website: www.screen.org or by emailing international@screen.org

November 2004

Small Country Big Picture

Small Country Big Picture, New Zealand's premiere film and television industry event was held in Auckland from 18 to 20 November.

Small Country Big Picture, a three-day conference run by the Screen Producers' and Directors' Association, looked at the interaction and interdependent relationships between New Zealand's domestic and international screen industries. The three-day conference run by the Screen Producers' and Directors' Association, looked at the interaction and interdependent relationships between New Zealand's domestic and international screen industries. One of the highlights was a pitching competition won by Annie Goldson, director of the internationally successful documentary, *Georgie Girl*. Goldson's winning project, *Elgar's Enigma*, is a music and history documentary tracing a New Zealand connection behind the composition of Edward Elgar's cello concerto, an anti-war anthem.

The Conference was sponsored by Screenrights as part of its commitment to supporting the Australian and New Zealand film industries.

November 2004

Tax legislation re-introduced into Parliament

Legislation to ensure that Screenrights royalties are not taxed twice has been re-introduced into the House of Representatives.

Under current tax laws, royalties collected by copyright collecting societies are taxed in the hands of the society and in the hands of members once this money is distributed.

Screenrights and other collecting societies have lobbied the Government for changes to this legislation to ensure that royalties are only taxed in the hands of members.

Legislation was introduced into Federal Parliament prior to the election in October. The Bill lapsed and was re-introduced on November 18.